

### What Medicare covers?

- **Influenza Immunizations:** Medicare began covering annual influenza immunizations in 1993 for all Medicare beneficiaries. Medicare covers both the costs of the vaccine and its administration by recognized providers. There is no coinsurance or co-payment applied to this benefit, and a beneficiary does not have to meet his or her deductible to receive this benefit.
- **Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccinations:** Medicare began covering pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccinations in 1981. Medicare provides coverage for 1 pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine for all beneficiaries. One vaccine at age 65 generally provides coverage for a lifetime, but for some high risk persons, a booster vaccine is needed. Medicare will also cover a booster vaccine for high risk persons if 5 years have passed since the last vaccination. Medicare covers both the costs of the vaccine and its administration by recognized providers. There is no coinsurance or co-payment applied to this benefit, and a beneficiary does not have to meet his or her deductible to receive this benefit.
- **Hepatitis B Vaccinations:** Medicare began covering hepatitis B vaccinations in 1984. Persons at high or intermediate risk, such as people with renal disease or hemophilia, homosexual men, and clients of institutions for the mentally handicapped are among those who are eligible to receive this benefit. Medicare covers both the costs of the vaccine and its administration by recognized providers. The coinsurance or co-payment applies after the yearly deductible has been met.

### General Facts:

- ***Influenza***, also called the “flu,” is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. There are over 200,000 hospitalizations from influenza on average every year. An average of 36,000 Americans die annually due to influenza and its complications – most are people 65 years of age and over. The best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated each year during the fall season. Because flu viruses change from year to year, it is important to get a flu shot each year. Medicare pays for the influenza immunization or “flu shot.” The links below provide general information related to influenza vaccinations.
- ***Pneumococcal pneumonia*** is the most common type of bacterial pneumonia. There are over 40,000 cases of invasive pneumococcal disease in the U.S. and approximately one-third of these cases occur in people 65 and older. Over half of the more than 5,000 annual deaths from invasive pneumococcal disease occur in persons 65 years of age and older. Medicare covers one pneumococcal vaccination for all Medicare beneficiaries. One vaccine at age 65 generally provides coverage for a lifetime, but for some high risk persons, a booster vaccine is needed. Medicare will also cover a booster vaccine for high risk persons if 5 years have passed since their last vaccination. The links below provide general information related to pneumococcal vaccinations.
- ***Hepatitis B*** virus can cause serious liver disease, including cirrhosis, liver cancer, liver failure, and death. The virus is found in the blood and body fluids of infected

people and can be spread through sexual contact or the sharing of needles. The hepatitis B vaccination can protect high risk persons, such as people with renal disease or hemophilia, from contracting the disease. The vaccine is delivered in a series of 3 shots. Medicare pays for hepatitis B vaccination for people considered to be at high risk for the disease.